Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-4.   Cancelled.

5. (Previously Presented) A system for managing shipping parcels, the system comprising:

a) a planning system, responsive to requests to plan shipping for a parcel, and responsive to stored planning information and to interactive planning information, for providing a rated route;

b) a shipping database, responsive to updates to planning information, for providing stored planning information, further responsive to a customer order including shipping requirements for the customer order, and further responsive to the rated route, for providing a stored rated route for shipping the parcel, the shipping database including a set of load planning tables, the set of load tables comprising:

i) a group table, for storing group identifiers, each group identifier used to identify a group of one or more parcels;

ii) a load table, for storing records of attributes associated with a load, which is in turn associated with a group, each record having a group identifier field and a load identifier field;

iii) a stop table, for storing records of attributes associated with a stop, which is in turn associated with a load, which is in turn associated with a group, each record having a group identifier field, a load identifier field, a stop identifier field, and a drop bill number field;

iv) a shipment header table, for storing records of attributes associated with a shipment, which is in turn optionally associated with a stop, which is in turn associated with a load, which is in turn associated with a group, each record having a group identifier field, a load identifier field, a bill number field that serves

as a shipment identifier and optionally relates the record to a record in the stop table via the drop bill number field in records of the stop table, an origin identifier field, and a destination identifier field; and

v) a cost table, for storing records of attributes associated with a component cost of a load, which is in turn associated with a load, which is in turn associated with a group, each record having a group identifier field, a load identifier field, a field indicating a cost type, and a field indicating a cost amount,

wherein the set of load planning tables applies business rules to a consignee party, a shipper party and to a third party, such that a route priority table is used to determine a time of arrival, a party responsible for payment and a destination location and applies the business rules to events and subevents to determine delivery parameters.

6. (Original) A system as in claim 5, wherein the records of the load table also include fields for indicating a master load identifier, a carrier identifier, a tariff identifier, an origin and a destination.

7. (Original) A system as in claim 6, wherein each record of the load table also include a field for indicating a pro number, a field for an inbound/outbound indicator, a field indicating an origin, and a field indicating a destination.

8. (Original) A system as in claim 5, wherein the records of the stop table also include fields for indicating a drop load identifier, a drop distribution center identifier, and a parent load.